

WEBER'S MODELS OF BUREAUCRACY IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

In this paper we make an effort to establish connection between Max Weber's models of bureaucracy and to apply the same in the context of the globalization. The theoretical bases of modern rational model of bureaucracy can be seen as one of the characteristics of global societies. Furthermore we analyze the function of international organizations as UN, World Bank, IMF etc. The example of European Union and its administrative capacities and structure are showing practical utilization of the model. This is very important in sense of generating model of bureaucratic settings which are connected with the bases produced by the theory of Max Weber. We assume that there is slide shift of the basic models toward new approach and perceptions. The discursive understanding of bureaucratic society offers alternative perspectives which include sociological, political and legal aspects integrated in synthetic approach. The future social developments and institutional bases of nation state are shaped intensively by globalization. In this sense state service is internationalized and boundaries reshaped.

Keywords: *Max Weber, bureaucracy, globalization, discourse, nation-state*

Contemporary movement of globalization as world process, as well the process of bureaucratization in front of the academic public opens the

possibility of dual positioning of their roles. There are some authors which are giving positive interpretations on bureaucracy, but also and those who toward the same have critical approach. There is similar perception and toward globalization. Yet, the ideal bureaucratic model created by Weber in his “Sociology of Understanding” enable us to understand and solve dualistic nature of both social phenomenon and to determine real course of social action.

Bureaucracy as a term often is used to mark mass administration, which is mediator between the particular citizens and political authorities. The new negative interpretation starts with De Gurney and the fisiocrates and, the liberal school of 19-th century. On this view also worked Rousseau, Hegel, Balzac, Marx, Trotsky, Gjilas and until many expected the critics by the Lefts, it came from the New right and conservatives.¹

In his famous book *Economy and Society* in which there are fundamental analyses of the public administration system, Weber gives definition of bureaucracy as necessity and expression of progressive society.²

¹ Modern critics of bureaucracy by Olsen have two aspects. Hi makes distinction between the criticisms that public administration is not bureaucratic enough and that it is excessively bureaucratic. By the first “bureaucrats are not acting in accordance with the institution’s ethos and codes of conduct. The staff is corrupt and unreliable, incompetent, inefficient, lazy, rigid and unresponsive, self-regarding, and uncontrollable. Administrators misuse their position and power. Laws are not executed in a competent and fair manner; the commands of superiors are not followed; and bureaucrats are not responsive to, or accountable to, elected political leaders or the constitution.

The second type of criticism is that rules are followed too slavishly or that public administration should be organized and staffed according to nonbureaucratic principles, administrators should act according to a different ethos and code of conduct, or there should not be public intervention at all. Complaints that a law is badly administered are then mixed with criticism of the content of the law and a principled opposition to the primacy of representative government”. Yet, contemporary critics often includes both aspects (Olsen, 2005: 5, 6).

² For Visitchaichan Weber’s model was more “hypothetical rather than a factual description of how most organization were structured. Therefore, it is also true that combinations of various organizational arrangements would appear in practice,

Rational authority becomes bureaucratic when faces complex administrative procedures (Đurić, 1964: 151). In this context he will notice: “*Bureaucratic administration represents fundamental domination through knowledge*”.

According to Max Weber ideal bureaucratic model is related with the existence of structural submission in which the authorities are roughly determined with acts of mutual control. The involving persons are professionals who for certain material benefits are practicing professional activities, the working positions are not inherited, there is determinate working time, procedures of professional development, and there is procedure of keeping the records (Beđer, 1976: 58-60). Therefore for Weber “*The bureaucratic structure is everywhere a late product of development. The further base we trace our steps, the more typical is the absence of bureaucracy and officialdom in the structure of domination. Bureaucracy has a rational character: rules, means, ends, and matter-of-factness dominate its bearing. Everywhere its origin and its diffusion therefore had ‘revolutionary’ results...*” (Gerath, H.H. and C. Wright Mills (ed). 1958: 244). From here, the bureaucracy is the most revolutionary invention of the modern Western civilization.³

The ambivalent relation of Weber toward the bureaucracy is defined by the critics which he addresses, building the ideal types or models. In the essence, he is determining the negative aspects of bureaucracy, going to the level of using the term depersonalizing bureaucracy. This is equally applicable to the modern world, even his work dates from the second decade of twentieth century. Moving one step further, Weber claims that the bureaucracy, which is to rationalized, can be threat for individual and personal

however, what Weber attempted to describe was one type of ideal organization for the purpose of theoretical analysis” (Visitchaihan, 2003: 132, 133).

³ Yet, for Lane “bureaucracy as a mechanism for carrying out the policies of rulers has, historically speaking, never operated according to the Weberian ideal-type. Bureaucracies have been invaded by affective ties, tribal loyalties and opportunistic selfishness. 20th century research into the bureaucratic phenomenon has resulted in numerous findings that question the applicability of Weber’s bureaucracy model. As a matter of fact, bureaucracies can support traditional domination, as within Chinese Empires or the Ottoman rulership. It may also figure prominently in charismatic rulership, as with The Third Reich or the Soviet State” (Lane, 2014: 7).

freedoms, threat which can lead to “*polar night of icy darkness*” and “*iron cage*” for the soul of the individuals.⁴

Bureaucratic organization, as technically superior comparing the other ideal types of authority is basic characteristic of the future systems of organization. But, greater rationalization makes bureaucratic system independent from the relations with the particular individuals in one society, and he becomes goal by itself, separated from those on which should serve. Developing parallel with the capitalism, goes in direction of concentration of the power in the hands of few individuals (Tameba, 1999: 327). Opposite from teleological view of Marx for creating of ideal society of equal classes, Weber is more pessimistic offering the possibility even in that ideal Marxist society, bureaucracy only to increase its power and domination. Dehumanizing aspects of bureaucratic society was (and is) one of the main characteristics of socialist societies, making “material equality” fluid, dispersive, non real and rightly utopistic. In this segment we can witness often dialectical expression of the rationalistic and romanticized aspects of the

⁴ “...bureaucracy has been considered as just an instance of those typically modern arrangements (e.g. technology, commodification of social relations) that have partaken in the erosion of the solid bonds of *gemeinschaft* and the construction and diffusion of the impersonal Geist of modern life. It has also been seen as a key means to the consolidation of the state and the dangers a strong central power harbours for civil society and individual liberties” (Kallinikos, 2006: 612).

Ritzer gives wider application of negative aspects of Weber’s bureaucratic models. Furthermore he will notice:

“Weber praised bureaucracies for their advantages over other mechanisms for discovering and implementing optimum means to ends, but at the same time he was painfully aware of the irrationalities of formally rational systems. Instead of being efficient systems, bureaucracies often become inefficient as the regulations that are used to make them rational degenerate into “red tape.” Bureaucracies often become unpredictable as employees grow unclear about what they are supposed to do and clients do not get the services they expect. The emphasis on quantifiability often leads to large amounts of poor quality work. Anger at the nonhuman technologies that are replacing them often leads employees to undercut or sabotage the operation of these technologies. By then, bureaucracies have begun to lose control over their workers as well as their constituents, and what was designed to be a highly rational operation often ends up irrational and quite out of control.” (Ritzer, 2007: 45).

modern society. Weber insist on interaction between rational human nature from one side, and the searching for the freedom from the other. Therefore, modern society has tendency to minimize the possibilities of personal choices, putting the individuals in the hands of bureaucratic machinery (Стојановски, 2014: 167-170).

Weber's ideal bureaucratic model gives us opportunity for easy access to preview and understanding of the phenomenon of globalization. First, there is the necessity of elaborating that the ideal model was not exclusively established only in the context of the particular nation-state, but in the context of the wider western society. This is certainly an important segment of his general, i.e. global approach, and therefore, on his works we can generate parallels to the present day modernity. Following this argument we can assume that the western civilization is equally attached to the modern bureaucratic models, but also and the globalization as a universal process, originated in the same West.⁵

Globalization, as well as bureaucracy, creates dual social perception, with the supporters and critics existing in the same time. Ideally seen, the globalization for pro-globalists, i.e. alter-globalization is natural phenomenon and process for integration of the planet in economic and political sense, with main goal of establishing universal values, i.e. universal justice.⁶

⁵ The period in which Weber defined bureaucracy is the time of the **golden standard** and the liberalization of the twentieth century, which often is called The First Age of Globalization. According many thinkers and scholars, parallel to the glowing of industrialization in Europe, there is increasing of "The First Age of Globalization". In his contemporarily, Weber can locate the Golden standard which was accepted by few most significant states at the time. The "first age of globalization" starts its disintegration in few stages, beginning with The First World War and totally collapsed during the Depression and the Great economic crisis of the 1929.

The globalization in the age after World War Two was directed in many rounds of world trade negotiations, primarily regarding general agreements of taxation, which leads toward limitation of the "free trade" barriers. With the goal of being mediator in world trade conflicts, the most significant example is the Uruguayan round which lead to formation of The World Trade Organization (WTO).

⁶ According to the supporters of globalization in the first stage, which was marked orientated, should end with the stage of building global political institutions which should represent the will of "the world citizen". Pro-globalists are not offering single

Therefore, in this frame of argumentation we can raise the question of the type of dominating globalization, and its concrete definition between the pejorative and affirmative qualifications by which we can scale it and produce measurable values.

In some views, the world is in process of “Corporative Globalization” dominates with larger conflicts, including the military ones. The term Alter-globalism originates from the logo “Better World is possible...” (Hinkelammert, Franz Jozef and Ulrich Durchov. 2004). According to this view, the threat from the corporative globalization, produced by neoliberal ideas, presents extreme expression of capitalism, even more rigid than the imperialism as we know it. Alter-globalists determine the corporative globalization as an effort for world ruling and domination, by the powerful corporations and companies with big amount of financial power, to influence and dominate world politics, participated in changing particular governments, with final goal of transforming the planet in profitable, exploited zone in which the profit as a highest value of globalization is limited to certain goals, diminishing the interests of the majority of the population in its even basic existence. Noticeably, the alter-globalists are different from the international workers movements, mainly because they do not oppose the capitalism and the free markets.

Logically, the globalization has need from adequate bureaucracy, i.e. public administration mechanism. But, corporatism creates bureaucracy which is less directed toward social and essential needs of the citizens, including the national interests, creating more of a kind of depersonalizing management of the authorities from alienated center of social hierarchy, primary focused on the economic interests of so called Global corporation.⁷ Therefore, this does not present authentic bureaucracy in service of the citizens, for which dreams

unified ideology which should orientated this will, and according to those views, the globalizing process should be free choice of the citizens accomplished through democracy.

⁷ “Bureaucratic structure goes hand by hand with concentration of material goods in the hands of the masters. This is happening on wary famous way in the capitalistic companies, in which she (bureaucracy) finds its significant characteristics... (Беџеп, 1976: 78).

Weber, but makes the citizens to serve her. We believe Weber has defined the negative relations toward bureaucracy. He offered real warning!⁸

From the moment when based on economical-political influence of the corporative spirit, bureaucracy will be put in service of the profit, from that moment ends and her positive role and she is transformed into oppressor.⁹ In fact, if we go step further, we can notice that for corporate globalization bureaucracy represents guardian of the system, with possibility to gain more importance even from legislative authority, i.e. the politicians. Namely, politicians are category submitted to confirmation of given legitimacy and can be changed, but public servants of the administration, i.e. bureaucracy has relatively more everlasting dimension.

Historical background in which Weber was living, gives one of the assumptions for his positive model of ideal bureaucracy, as universal model which, if implemented, will become advocate of the positive character of globalization. Globalization as a process can find supportive motives in Weber's depersonalizing bureaucracy, in which professionals with moral and humane integrity will be primary involved. The alternative of corporatism is deeply humanistic and progressive. Instead of primary role to be addressed toward material gaining and profit, the citizen and its individual needs can additionally be in favor of the collective solidarity and priorities. In the global

⁸ The Power of fully developed bureaucracy is always very big, and in normal circumstances dominated... This power of professional experts every bureaucracy tries to increase on the way as *keeper of secrecy* of its knowledge and intentions. Bureaucratic authority by its tendency is always authority which excludes the public. She keep a secret its knowledge and work from the critics as more possible that is... (Ibidem, 87).

⁹ "Two key legalinstitutional arrangements have emerged and became consolidated in the course of industrial capitalism, i.e. those of property rights and the employment contract, providing gradually a polyvalent framework of laws, rules and regulations decreeing the operations of private businesses. The corporation is thus a variant of the bureaucratic form of organization. Rather than reflecting solely the functional requirements associated with the efficient production of goods and services, the structural morphology of corporations (i.e. hierarchy, role differentiation, standard operating procedures) and the modes by which businesses in general operate are significantly shaped by the complex institutional environment in which the making of profit must be pursued" (Kallinikos, 2006: 619).

context, the only function of bureaucracy is related with exclusive service of the citizens' demands, and based on universal principles for protection of basic of human rights and values. Alter-globalization¹⁰ does not necessarily pretend toward one planetary center of power, but toward unification of "the human kind" based on the positive experiences from his heritage and history. Therefore, she does not offer one type of uniform bureaucracy for the all planet, but leaves opportunities societies to structure public administration by their own needs, traditions, and demands, limited not to jeopardize humanities universal values.

Conclusion

Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy is related with rational authority of professional administrative servicemen, which are defined through professional status and qualifications. Through twentieth century this produced many debates in which bureaucracy was seen through positive interpretation, but also, and through critical approach. Dehumanizing potential of overextended bureaucracy refers to all political systems. On the same ground globalization has its supporters and critics. New globalizing trends impose need for new type of professional bureaucracy, which decline from the Weber's basic models. Therefore, Alter-globalization makes shift in orthodox approaches toward globalization, mainly in perception that there is no need for one center of dominating power, but toward unification of "the human kind" based on the positive experiences from his heritage and history.

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¹⁰ More on Alter-globalization, see Pleyers, G. (2010) *Alter-globalization: Becoming Actors in the Global Age*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

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